

Message Text

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45

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 NEA-09 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 IO-10 OMB-01 AID-05 PC-01 /081 W

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R 030927Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 337

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 1494

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PFOR, RP, SA

SUBJECT: PHILIPPINE PEACE TALKS BREAK OFF

REF: JIDDA 748 (NOTAL)

1. EXECUTIVE SECRETARY ALEX MELCHOR AND HIS DELEGATION RETURNED TO MANILA FROM JIDDA EVENING JANUARY 31. DURING COURSE OF WEEKEND AND MORNING FEBRUARY 3, I HAVE HAD THREE CONVERSATIONS WITH MELCHOR IN WHICH HE HAS REPORTED ON HIS NEGOTIATING EXPERIENCES WITH MORO NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT (MNLF).

2. MELCHOR REPORTS TOTALLY FRUSTRATING EXPERIENCE, WHICH BEGAN WHEN HE AND HIS TEAM HAD TO WAIT TWO DAYS IN JIDDA FOR NUR MISUARI TO ARRIVE FROM TRIPOLI IN ORDER FOR TALKS TO COMMENCE. NUR THEN READ STATEMENT WHICH AL-TOHAMY TOLD MELCHOR HE (TOHAMY) HAD WRITTEN "IN HIS CAPACITY AS CONFIDENTIAL

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DEDIATOR."

3. AFTER INITIAL NUR MISUARI APPEARANCE, HE RETREATED INTO SECLUSION AND LEFT DISCUSSIONS TO SUBORDINATES, WHO APPEARED HAVE NO AUTHORITY OR FLEXIBILITY WHATEVER. THESE SUBORDINATES, ACCORDING TO MELCHOR, CONTINUALLY RECEIVED "ADVICE" FROM LIBYAN DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER, WHO APPEARED TO BE MASTERMINDING ENTIRE EXERCISE. THEY STUCK TO DEFINITION OF "AUTONOMY" FOR THEIR "HOMELANDS" WHICH AMOUNTED TO SECESSION.

4. IN EFFORT JOG THINGS ALONG, MELCHOR ACCOMPANIED AL TOHAMY TO TRIPOLI FOR VISIT WITH JALLOU. ALTHOUGH DISCUSSIONS IN TRIPOLI WERE CIVIL, MELCHOR GOT NOWHERE IN OBTAINING ANY SENSE OF LIBYAN SYMPATHY WITH ADVANCING SUCCESSES OF NEGOTIATIONS.

5. IN CAIRO, MELCHOR FELT HE HAD OBTAINED SYMPATHETIC HEARING FROM SADAT AND THAT EGYPTIAN ATTITUDE IN ISLAMIC CONFERENCE LIKELY PROVE CONSTRUCTIVE. HE IS AWARE, HOWEVER, OF LIMITED EGYPTIAN INTEREST IN PHILIPPINES AND LIMITED INFLUENCE SADAT MAY HAVE WITH ISLAMIC EXTREMISTS.

6. IN SAUDI ARABIA ITSELF, MELCHOR WAS SOMEWHAT PUZZLED BY TREATMENT HE RECEIVED. AT FIRST, WHEN HE WAS UNABLE EVEN TO GET TELEPHONE CONNECTION TO MANILA, HE FELT HIS COMMUNICATIONS WERE DELIBERATELY BEING FRUSTRATED. LATER HE ACCEPTED THAT THIS WAS PROBABLY THE FAULT OF JIDDA'S PRIMITIVE FACILITIES RATHER THAN A REFLECTION OF SAUDI SABOTAGE. HE WAS PLEASED BY HIS VISIT WITH PRINCE FAHD, BUT DISAPPOINTED THAT HE COULD NOT SEE THE KING.

7. AHMED SIRAJ WAS LIKEWISE PERPLEXING. HE WAS VERY ATTENTIVE AND APPEARED VERY SYMPATHETIC. ON THE OTHER HAND, HE LACED HIS ATTENTIONS AND SYMPATHIES WITH SOME RATHER STRAIGHTFORWARD REQUESTS FOR SPECIAL CONSIDERATION AS EXCLUSIVE COMMERCIAL AGENT IN SAUDI ARABIA FOR PHILIPPINE CEMENT AND OTHER POTENTIAL ITEMS OF TRADE.

8. MELCHOR SAYS THAT IT WAS FORMALLY AGREED WITH MNLF THAT TALKS HAD MERELY BEEN "RECESSED" AND THAT THEY SHOULD

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RESUME IN FIRST WEEK IN APRIL. VENUE IS STILL TO BE JIDDA, ALTHOUGH MELCHOR IS CLEARLY UNHAPPY ABOUT PROSPECT OF RENEWING THESE FRUSTRATIONS IN A SECOND ROUND.

9. COMMENT: PRESIDENT MARCOS TOLD ME THAT HE FEELS TALKS WERE DOOMED TO FAILURE BECAUSE NUR MISUARI AND LIBYANS NEVER INTENDED TO NEGOTIATE SERIOUSLY. HE STILL, HOWEVER, BELIEVES THAT AL-TOHAMY WAS ACTING IN GOOD FAITH.

MELCHOR, ON THE OTHER HAND, FEELS THAT AL-TOHAMY HAS BEEN
DOUBLE-DEALING AND THAT HE IS ACTING IN LEAGUE WITH THE
LIBYANS. BOTH PRESIDENT AND MELCHOR FEEL THEY HAVE TO
CONTINUE TO DIALOGUE IN THIS VENUE IN ORDER COMPLY WITH
ISLAMIC CONFERENCE RESOLUTION. HOWEVER, THEY NOW FEEL
MORE CONVINCED THAN EVER THAT THEIR ONLY REAL HOPE LIES
WITH INDONESIAN MEDIATION.
SULLIVAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MOSLEMS, PEACE TALKS, NEGOTIATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 FEB 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975MANILA01494
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750038-0979
From: MANILA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750278/aaaacsgw.tel
Line Count: 123
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 JIDDA 748
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14 JUL 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <15 JUL 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PHILIPPINE PEACE TALKS BREAK OFF
TAGS: PINS, PFOR, RP, SA, MNLF, (MELCHOR, ALEX)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006